

# Evening Telegraph

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TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 1871.

## THE APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM.

ONE of the most striking passages in the able  
presentation of the late Grand Jury is that in  
which it states that the rapid abandonment  
of the apprenticeship system "robs many a  
youth of discipline that might prove an an-  
chor of safety to him; while it also perceptibly  
embarrasses our measures for the care of  
friendless and the reformation of improvident  
juveniles." True! but as this statement is,  
however, it may well be questioned whether  
the old practice of indenturing the young can  
ever be re-established. Various circum-  
stances have united to destroy it, probably  
forever. The character of the tuition or in-  
struction imparted has, in many trades,  
been radically changed. Formerly, an ap-  
prentice mastered varied departments before  
he became a journeyman. If he was a hatter,  
he learned how to make a complete hat; if he  
was a shoemaker, he made an entire shoe; if  
he was a saddler, he made a saddle; if he was  
a cabinet-maker, he made all kinds of furni-  
ture; if he was a carpenter, he learned every-  
thing deemed important that pertained to  
that trade, etc. Now, however, through the  
introduction of numerous machines and the  
concentration of many workmen in large  
establishments, there is a constant tendency  
to increase the subdivisions of labor in nearly  
all trades, so that there are few places in  
cities where an apprentice could learn any  
trade as an entirety, in the old-fashioned  
manner. It was also a common feature of  
the apprenticeship system that the appren-  
tices boarded under the same roof as the  
master, becoming a part of his household as  
well as employees in his workshop. For  
obvious reasons this custom is not adapted to  
the mode of social life now generally prevail-  
ing in the large cities. Aside from these  
reasons, there would now be great repugnance  
on the part of the parents of Young America,  
and on the part of Young America himself, to  
such a submission to the will of a master as  
was generally exacted under the old system;—  
so that it is not difficult to discover causes  
for the decadence of the custom of indentur-  
ing apprentices, however much such a result  
may be deplored.

The practical question is, how the best  
substitute for it can be supplied. A partial  
substitute is already in very general opera-  
tion; that is, many thousands of boys are now  
at work under verbal or written articles of  
agreement, receiving money wages in lieu of  
board and clothing, and remaining with their  
employers for such periods as are mutually  
agreeable, the boy being discharged instead  
of being whipped when he is incorrigibly idle  
or vicious, and a change of employers being  
made by the boy, whenever he considers it  
his interest or advantage to make such a  
change, without any danger of his being ad-  
vertised as a runaway. This may be a poor  
substitute, but it is the best that has been  
provided, and in some trades in which it has  
become the custom of all the employers to  
avoid employing or enticing away from other  
employers partially trained minors, it still  
works tolerably well.

Additional provision for the practical busi-  
ness instruction of tens of thousands of boys  
is, however, manifestly needed. They are  
sent to the public schools, and bright hopes  
are built upon the prospect of the wonderful  
things they will accomplish after they are  
rendered prodigies of learning. But in  
thousands of instances all the geography,  
grammar, logic, Greek, and Latin that can  
be crammed into their brains does not teach  
them how to make an honest living. The  
people who obtain a livelihood directly  
through their book knowledge, in this coun-  
try, form a very small portion of its inhabi-  
tants. While book education confers im-  
measurable benefits by the mental training  
it promotes and by the general enlighten-  
ment it produces, it does not, in one case out  
of a hundred, absolutely furnish the means  
for self-support. A very large proportion  
of the best educated men are, in a money-making  
sense, utter failures, while a large proportion  
of those who were peculiarly successful were  
dull school-boys, and remain throughout  
their careers ignorant of and indifferent to  
book knowledge. We make these trite state-  
ments here only to give point to the sugges-  
tion that a greater amount of mechanical or  
technical instruction should be infused into  
the educational system of all large towns.  
We have seen what the Schools of Design are  
capable of doing for young women, what  
polytechnic schools can do for young men  
destined for special pursuits, what West Point  
does for the officers of the army of the United  
States, what the Naval School does for the  
navy; and it is a question worthy  
of the most serious attention  
whether the principle developed  
by the success of the institutions referred to  
might not, and should not, be extended to  
arts. We are aware that the task involves  
some practical difficulties, but it is every year  
growing more and more of a necessity to pa-  
rents in moderate circumstances and to so-  
ciety at large that better agencies than those  
now existing should be provided for the dis-  
ciple of the homely but imperative duty of  
giving to many thousands of young lads in-  
struction that will insure to them an honest  
livelihood.

## THE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS.

The report made yesterday at the annual  
meeting of the stockholders of the Academy  
of Fine Arts can scarcely be very satisfactory  
to the friends of the institution. The Aca-  
demy, it appears, owns property—exclusive of  
its art collection—to the value of \$147,500,  
nearly the whole of which is so tied up that  
it is not available for practical purposes, but  
on the contrary is eating itself up  
at a somewhat rapid rate. Money has to be  
paid out for necessary expenses, but nothing  
of any consequence is coming in. It is pro-  
posed to borrow on mortgage on one of the  
lots owned by the Academy the sum of \$6000  
to meet probable loss on real estate, interest  
and taxes, and as an offset to this we are in-  
formed that the sum of \$1000 has been placed  
in the hands of the Treasurer as a contribution towards  
the erection of new galleries. The  
present, it appears, is not considered an auspi-  
cious time for an appeal for funds towards a  
new Academy, and active operations are to be  
deferred until next year, when the directors  
will signalize themselves by a combined  
attack upon the pockets of the moneyed men  
of Philadelphia. We hope the attack will be  
successful, but doubt whether it will unless a  
new and more liberal policy is adopted for the  
management of the institution. Money can be  
obtained just as well this year as next, if  
those who have the means to contribute can  
be convinced that they will get a return for  
their investments in the shape of an Art Aca-  
demy that will be really creditable to the  
city, that will be a valuable public institution  
and not a mere plaything for a few gentlemen  
of elegant leisure.

We regret that the comments of THE TELE-  
GRAPH do not appear to have been accepted in a  
proper spirit by the directors of the Academy,  
and we consider the little outbreak with re-  
gard to this journal which took place at the  
meeting yesterday as entirely uncalled for.  
We have been unable to see why a board of  
directors who have not been able to manage  
their own institution should desire to obtain  
jurisdiction over another one that is doing a  
good work in a quiet, unostentatious  
way, and we accordingly expressed a  
hope that the School of Design  
for Women would not be united with the  
Academy of Fine Arts. We see nothing in  
the report made yesterday to induce an altera-  
tion of our original opinion on this subject,  
which is that such a change would swamp the  
School of Design and destroy its usefulness.  
With regard to the statement that the Super-  
intendent of the School of Design wrote  
the article condemning the proposed con-  
solidation of the two schools, we can only  
enter an express denial. The gentleman  
in question never wrote an editorial for THE  
TELEGRAPH in his life, and in all probability  
he never will. The directors of the Academy  
of Fine Arts will do better to study the facts  
which we present from time to time for their  
consideration, and to consider candidly the  
good advice we offer them, rather than to  
worry themselves about who writes our arti-  
cles.

## CIVIL SERVICE REFORM.

PRESIDENT GRANT has at last taken such action  
as Congress has warranted in the matter of  
the reform of the civil service. The appropria-  
tion bill approved March 3, 1871, con-  
tained a provision authorizing the promulga-  
tion of rules for the admission of persons to  
the civil service of the country, and the ex-  
amination of candidates in regard to their  
personal fitness for the positions to which  
they aspire. From the character of the names  
announced as members of the board to carry  
out the provisions of the act, the people  
have good cause to hope for gratifying  
results from the experiment about to be  
made. The list is headed by George William  
Curtis, Esq., one of the most accomplished  
men of the day, whose earnest advocacy of  
political reform in the public press and on  
the rostrum shows his heart to be in the  
cause. Then comes James Medill, Esq., the  
able editor of the Chicago Tribune, who, as a  
member of the recent Constitutional Conven-  
tion of Illinois, displayed an equal earnestness  
in the cause of reform. He was the author  
of the provisions in the new Con-  
stitution of Illinois which estab-  
lish the system of cumulative  
voting, and may be expected to further the  
cause of civil service reform in every pos-  
sible way. The next name on the list is that  
of the Hon. Alexander G. Cattell, ex-United  
States Senator from New Jersey, whose record  
in the highest legislative body of the country  
was unusually pure and public-spirited.  
Senator Cattell has filled the highest position  
in the gift of the people of his State, and has  
now withdrawn from the field of partisan  
politics. He is therefore in a position of  
absolute independence, and by his ex-  
perience of public life is rarely fitted  
to discharge his new duties with an  
eye single to the interests of the  
public service. The other three members of  
the board are connected with the executive  
departments at Washington, and doubtless  
have had enough experience with incompe-  
tent public servants to inspire an earnest  
desire for securing a better class of men.  
They know precisely what requirements are  
needed in the civil service, and may be ex-  
pected to insist rigidly on excluding all ap-  
licants who do not come up to a fair standard  
of merit. Altogether, the experiment about  
to be inaugurated will be made under favor-  
able auspices, and if the hands of the board  
are strengthened by the President's support,  
excellent results may be anticipated.

## THE SENTENCE OF MRS. FAIR.

MRS. LAURA D. FAIR's counsel having failed  
to obtain for her a new trial, she has been  
sentenced to be hanged on the 28th of July.  
There is a natural repugnance to seeing the  
extreme penalty of the law visited upon a  
woman, but a number of circumstances would  
render clemency in this case a grievous  
wrong to society, and it is to be  
hoped that Mrs. Fair's sentence will be  
carried out to the letter. It is highly im-  
portant that a certain class of women should  
understand that their sex will not be allowed

to stand in the way of punishment for crime,  
and that if they will commit murder the gal-  
lows will be their doom. If Miss Harris, who  
shot her sometime lover in Washington a  
few years ago because he preferred to marry  
another woman, and a few other female  
criminals who have made themselves amenable  
to the laws by their too ready use of the pis-  
tol, had suffered as they deserved to do, the  
probabilities are that Mrs. Fair would not  
have been placed in her present predicament.  
As it is, she fully merits the doom which now  
awaits her, for the murder of Crittenden is  
not the only crime of the kind of which she  
is guilty, and the death penalty might as well  
be abolished altogether if it is not enforced  
in her case. The Governor of California  
now has an opportunity to perform an im-  
portant service to the country by sternly re-  
fusing to interfere in behalf of Mrs. Fair,  
who deserves nothing whatever at his hands;  
and if her sentence is carried out it will have  
a greater moral effect than the hanging of a  
dozen men, and it will exert a powerful in-  
fluence in checking the murderous propensi-  
ties of handsome female fiends who con-  
sider that they now have a license to kill at  
pleasure.

## SAD INFATUATION.

MANY people, as the Knights Templar swept  
in gorgeous array through the streets the  
other day, envied those latter-day pil-  
grims their grand merry-go-round of the  
next three months, and the accounts fur-  
nished of their doings on the way to New  
York and in that city are not reassuring to  
those who would "love to roam"—but can't.  
Whatever else they may be, the Sir Knights  
appear to be men of "unbounded stomachs."  
Here is a tidy preparation for their pilgrim-  
age. On the train from Philadelphia the tour-  
ists were abundantly regaled by their friends.  
On arriving in Jersey City the guests were  
conveyed to Taylor's Hotel, where a collation  
embracing all the delicacies of the season  
was partaken of. Thereafter they crossed to  
New York, and marching to the St. Nicholas,  
sat down to a grand dinner. And after din-  
ner the fortunate, or unfortunate, pilgrims  
were seized by the Ivanhoe Commandery and  
forced somehow or other to dispose of an  
elaborate strawberry supper. This, it must  
be remembered, was before the pilgrims  
left their native shores to fall into the  
hands of people who will make an  
especial point of their hospitality. At this  
rate, by the time the Sir Knights reach Jeru-  
salem, they will be ready to buy up all the  
stray copies of "Banting" which the book-  
sellers of the Holy Land can furnish them.  
Their dearest friends would not be able to  
recognize them, and the band will not be able  
to blow a single note out of its once melli-  
fluous throat. And yet such is the perversity  
of human nature, and so little do the most  
painful warnings impress us, that it is prob-  
able that 50,000 Philadelphians would madly  
rush after the pilgrims if they could get the  
chance, and willingly suffer all the conse-  
quences.

## AN "EPISCOPALIAN" OPINION OF "FAUST."

Some one has been indiscreet enough to send the  
libretto of Faust for review to our contemporary,  
The Episcopalian. This is what he gets for his  
trouble:—  
From reading the explanatory preface of the  
drama, we should think it very objectionable on the  
score of morals. What do Christians want to know,  
either by poetry or by song, much less by represen-  
tation, the hidden things of darkness, of which it is  
a shame even to speak? Why cannot we have  
music of the highest character unconnected with  
vice and crime? Cannot a love-scene be depicted  
without sin and impurity? Cannot a pure and  
sanctified affection on which the Lord will  
smile be portrayed and surrounded with  
the embellishments of art, without  
being dragged into the mire of sin, and  
fouled with the profane language of the pit? We  
surely could not go to listen to this piece of music  
nor allow any over whom we had a responsible con-  
trol to go. We could not permit it to be sung in  
private, or in the presence of the Christian home.  
We fear we shall be condemned by the musical  
critics, and regarded as too particular by many of  
whom we should expect a different judgment. But  
it is not the art, the science, the music, the  
decoration and embellishment, the beauty  
and melody, we repudiate or fail to appre-  
ciate. It is the sentiment, the dramatic  
action, the worldly and wicked scenes portrayed by  
the story, to which we object. We regret that genius  
cannot give us something unexceptionable in the  
direction we have pointed out. Could it not be  
the case if that genius was inspired by the spirit of  
true religion? But to us it seems as if the poetic  
affluence comes from another spirit, even that of the  
god of this world. We think for Christian families  
the advice of Solomon is well applied to operatic  
amusements, studies, and scenes:—"Avoid it, pass  
not by it, turn from it and pass away."

The reviewer is apparently oblivious of the fact  
that the libretto in question is an exceedingly di-  
luted version of Goethe's great poem, but it may be  
well under the belief that the original is a naughty  
work which Christians should avoid, pass by and  
turn away from, or more probably he knows nothing  
whatever about the poem. He is not the reviewer  
acknowledges having based his opinion on a perusal  
of the explanatory preface, and it is tolerably evi-  
dent that he has never read a scene of Goethe's  
poem or witnessed an act of Gounod's opera—or of  
any other opera, in fact. Such being the case, how  
is it to be expected that either the religious or the  
non-religious public will have any particular regard  
for the views of the Episcopalian on the moral ten-  
dencies of either the poem or the opera? We hold  
that the moral tendencies of a literary or artistic  
work should, so far as they are good or bad, secure for it the praise or condemna-  
tion of both the religious and the secular press; but  
before condemnation is passed, the censor should at  
least know what he is talking about. Now the opera  
of Faust happens to be one of the most profoundly  
affecting productions of the modern stage, and it is  
not possible for a person of any sensibility to witness  
a reasonably good performance of it without being as  
much improved as by the ordinary run of sermons, or  
even by the weekly dissertations upon religion and  
morality to be found in the columns of the Episcopalian.  
The music of Gounod's Faust, although its  
claims to the highest rank are denied by some, is  
strangely in sympathy with the subject, and the  
struggles of a pure soul with the powers of evil, and  
its ultimate triumph and purification through suffer-  
ing, are so set forth that a theatre full of people who  
witness the opera are, to our way of thinking, far  
more likely to be benefited morally than they would  
be if they took the well-meant but ignorant advice  
of our contemporary and remained away. All true  
art points its moral unmistakably, and as its influence  
is purifying and healthy to all but those  
atticted with moral and diseased imaginations, it is  
a most important auxiliary to religion. If  
Gounod's Faust is condemned, then Goethe's works  
must come under the ban, and if Goethe's poem  
why not Dante's or Milton's or Shakespeare's plays?  
or, in fact, ninety-nine out of a hundred of the great  
productions of the human intellect that have been  
read with profit and pleasure by the best men and  
women of centuries past? The "Divine Comedy,"  
"Paradise Lost," the best of Shakespeare's trage-  
dies, all treat of the "hidden things of darkness," as  
the Episcopalian puts it, and we scarcely think that  
our contemporary is prepared to advocate their  
banishment from the libraries of the faithful; but

If these productions are allowed, so must  
the opera of Faust, for the same objections will  
apply to the others as to it. Ignorance of evil may  
be a very good thing, but in this wicked world it is  
impossible that the average man or woman can re-  
main ignorant of evil; and the best intellects in the  
Church and out of it are of the opinion that the  
study of just such works as those we have referred  
to exert an important influence in strengthening  
Christians for the work of combating evil, and in  
bringing the minds of the non-religious into a suit-  
able state for the reception of religious and moral  
impressions. Of course, there are some professed  
teachers of religion whose opportunities for literary  
and artistic study and investigation have been lim-  
ited, and they settle the matter to their own satis-  
faction by dealing out general denunciation to what-  
ever may not happen to strike their uneducated  
fancies favorably at first glance. That the cause of  
religion is promoted by such proceeding we do not  
believe.

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